

Chapter 5 *Physical Activity*

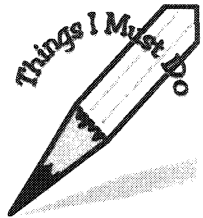
Module 2: Creating Physical Activity Actions



Step Up and Step Out to increase opportunities for physical activity in your community!



Have you already thought of ways your community can raise the bar to increase physical activity opportunities? Begin the fun by assembling key players! If park and recreation department administrators, and school district PE staff were not a part of original listening session and brainstorming discussions, it would be good to get their input and create partnerships before planning your actions!



1. Involve key players

The physical education and classroom educator plays a vital role in the actions planned and needs to be a part of planning from the very beginning.

2. Use information from the community review, listening sessions and VMSOA planning

Planning is now directed towards specific actions to meet the objectives set for Physical Activity.

3. Build on what exists



Begin with easy to implement and low cost actions. Be flexible.

Planning for Environmental Changes:

1. Involve key players
2. Use information from the community review, listening sessions and VMSOA planning
3. Build on what exists
4. Plan actions using environmental change methods
5. Plan ways to measure success
6. Take actions
7. Review results

4. Plan actions using the environmental change methods

The methods are discussed in Chapter 2 *Action Planning* Module 5: Action Planning Tools to create plans for change:

- | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| ♥ Policy | ♥ Repetition | ♥ Support |
| ♥ Collaboration | ♥ Education | ♥ Reward |

5. Plan for ways to measure success

Tips for measuring success are given in Module 5 of this Chapter.

6. Take actions



Planning is very important, but groups can get bogged down and people lose interest if actions are not taken early. The only way to be sure something will work is to try it!

7. Review results

The **Environmental Change Plan** is very helpful. The planning steps can be reviewed and comments for revision noted. It provides an excellent communication tool.

Changing the environment to increase physical activity

A survey commissioned by the International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI) (1) found there is a genuine interest among parents and children in volunteering to bring physical activity opportunities to families and communities. A significant finding resulting from the survey is that public school facilities (playgrounds, gyms, swimming pools, etc.) are underutilized physical assets and that parents and older children are willing to volunteer in helping turn community schools into recreational centers during non-school hours—afternoon, evening, weekend, and summer.

What are the potentials in your community...not only the public school facilities, but also any place that physical activity can occur? Take a close look at what exists in the community while considering the factors that motivate people to increase physical activity choices.

“What Turns Kids on to Fitness” (2)

Turn Ons

- ♥ Having fun
- ♥ Feeling successful
- ♥ Playing with peers
- ♥ Sharing experiences with family
- ♥ Experiencing a variety of activities
- ♥ Having an enthusiastic coach or teacher
- ♥ Feeling that an active lifestyle is their own choice



Turn Offs

- ♥ Putting winning above all else
- ♥ Never improving
- ♥ Getting injured too often
- ♥ Feeling forced to play through pain
- ♥ Doing the same thing over and over
- ♥ Getting ridiculed by friends, family or coach
- ♥ Not having a say in the sports they play

In addition, there is some evidence to suggest that if the following conditions are met, activity becomes a necessary part of one's life (3):

- ♥ The activity must be noncompetitive; the student chooses and wants to do it.
- ♥ It must not require a great deal of mental effort.
- ♥ The activity can be done alone, without a partner or teammates.
- ♥ Students must believe in the value of the (activity) for improving health and general welfare.
- ♥ Participants must believe that the activity will become easier and more meaningful if they persist. To become a habit, the activity must be done for at least 6 months.

Environmental changes to increase activity

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention provides tips to also keep in mind when planning for environmental change. (4) They include:

- ♥ Provide access to safe spaces and facilities for physical activity in the school and the community...readily available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity
- ♥ Establish and enforce measures to prevent physical activity injuries and illnesses.
- ♥ Provide time within the school day for unstructured physical activity
- ♥ Discourage the use or withholding of physical activity as punishment
- ♥ Provide health promotion programs for school faculty and staff

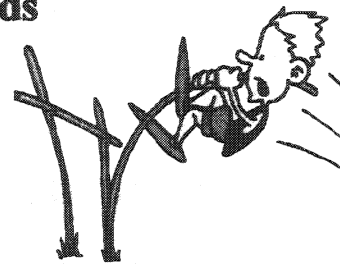


Jump into change!

Anything that increases movement works! Anything that is easy and fun can be successful! Consider how you can encourage or make it easier for people to choose the following:

- ♥ **Everyday activities:**
Walking the dog, mowing, raking leaves, picking up at home
- ♥ **Workday activities:**
Fitness/stretch breaks, stairs vs. elevator, walking/biking to work
- ♥ **Recreational activities:**
Running, walking, basketball, football, soccer, volleyball, aerobics
- ♥ **Leisure/play activities:**
Swinging, miniature golf, jump rope, climbing, playing, dance, skating
- ♥ **School activities:**
Physical education and classroom movement

Pole vault into action with environmental methods



Policy method of environmental change

Are there written or “unwritten” policies regarding physical activity? Do the policies promote enjoyable lifelong physical activity?

Examples:



Example 1: One community had a long history (unwritten policy) of a very competitive parks and recreation programs. Summer baseball teams had only the best, most competitive players. The community did not give this a second thought until the school health coalition reviewed community options for noncompetitive physical activity. Changes to add noncompetitive opportunities to the existing program made it possible for many more children to participate in recreation programs. The community increases awareness and builds participation each year.

Example 2: It was one community’s policy to designate a health and wellness committee as a part of the Chamber of Commerce. The committee was continuously looking for ways to increase opportunities for health and wellness in order to make the community more attractive to business. This “policy” helped to sustain the goals of the school health initiative throughout the business community.

Example 3: Another community had an “unwritten policy” to incorporate healthy games as a part of their county fair. Repetition, another environmental change method, has made this an event everyone looked forward to!

Example 4: It is difficult to send the message to students that physical activity is important when scheduling doesn’t allow for physical education classes more than twice a week for most students, and not at all for some students! One school found the opportunity to arrange the schedule to increase the frequency of PE from several times a week to everyday.

Motivating policy makers to make change

1. Use information from *Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: A School Health Policy* developed by the National Association of State Boards of Education, (5) along with other guidelines.

Examples:



Example 1: “Teachers shall aim to develop students’ self-confidence and maintain a safe psychological environment free of embarrassment, humiliation, shaming, taunting, or harassment of any kind. Physical education staff shall not order performance of physical activity as a form of discipline or punishment.”

Example 2: “As health-related physical fitness is influenced by factors beyond the control of students and teachers (such as genetics, physical maturation, disabling conditions, and body composition), test results shall not be used to determine course grades or to assess the performance of individual teachers.”

2. Look for win/win situations. Policy makers strive to maintain continuity while balancing the financial, legal and moral demands of the whole community.

- ♥ Can you make change cost-effective?
- ♥ Can the change increase recognition and support?
- ♥ Can the change improve quality of life for the community?

Collaboration method of environmental change

Win/win situations occur when partners work together to share responsibilities, resources, and rewards!

Examples:



Example 1: A community recreation department was searching for options to expand choices for individual activities at the same time school district administrators were concerned about the cost of maintaining the high school swimming pool. Collaboration between the two groups resulted in a sharing of maintenance expenses and expanded individual swimming opportunities for the community, a “win/win” solution.



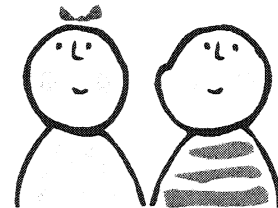
Example 2: Patients at a local hospital were in need of daily physical activity to rehabilitate injuries. The hospital staff approached a local motel with an indoor swimming pool to collaborate on a partnership that would meet patient needs and bring additional revenue to the motel. The partnership also led to community recognition and enhanced quality of life for residents.

Example 3: Latchkey programs for at risk students presented opportunities in two communities. Programs that originally provided only academic tutoring academics, or "fill time," now incorporate healthy snacks and physical activity. One of the communities contacted a church whose members were interested in donating foods to help with the snacks. Collaboration with the church has created a wonderful opportunity for them to further their mission by educating and modeling healthy choices. The other community has support from the school system to hire staff to incorporate healthy snacks and physical activity in the tutoring program.

Repetition method of environmental change

Giving up too soon is a common mistake when creating environmental change. It takes a while sometimes for something to "catch on."

Other times, repeating something gives the coalition an opportunity to identify areas for improvement, and with a little revision, a "disappointment" can become a success. Most of us are aware of an event (like the New York City Marathon) that began very small but has grown huge with repetition.



Examples:



Example 1: One community created a "family walk" activity for their annual Fall Festival. The first year participation was fair, but the second year it was lower. The community was disappointed with participation and considered eliminating the activity. However, after problem solving, it was determined that the location of the walking course, and traffic congestion made participation very difficult. The coalition is working on a plan to change the location and timing of the walk to make participation easier.

Example 2: Another community started a tradition of a summer recreation event that was supported by local businesses. Community members got together for a day filled with swimming, volleyball, healthy foods, and other fun events. Repetition made this a very popular event.

Education method of environmental change

Education is important to create awareness or increase knowledge and skills to make healthy physical activity choices.



Examples:



Example 1: A rash of athletic injuries in a wide range of sports—including football, basketball and track—prompted a coalition to initiate a change. The goal was to reduce the number of sports injuries and loss of playing time due to injury. The coalition convinced the school's athletic staff and administration to make a commitment to educate the school staff and students about benefits and how to stretch for greater flexibility.

In addition to making stretching a key part of all sports practices, this program added a stretching program three times a day for three-five minutes, at the elementary school level. Now several years later, the students who were taught how to stretch, and the value associated with increased flexibility, are incorporating that practice into their daily routine as easily as they catch a pass, shoot a free throw or cross the finish line.

What started out as education about reducing sports injuries was transposed into a fundamental attitude and belief that stretching is an essential part of not only athletics, but also of daily living.

Example 2: An after-school tutoring program for at-risk kids incorporates teaching skills in lifetime sports. Many at-risk kids do not participate or have an interest in sports because they do not feel comfortable in a competitive environment. This totally noncompetitive environment opens more possibilities for learning.

Support method of environmental change

Arranging the environment to make change easier is a key manner of support. Other ways the coalition can provide support is through the provision of resources, or with recognition.

Examples:



Example 1: A community had a wonderful walking track that was rarely used. Through a coalition listening session it was discovered that the public did not feel safe when using the track at night. While most community members wanted to walk in the evenings, a dark walking path invited trouble. Empowered with community input and goals, the coalition provided support for a successful community fund-raising campaign to light the track!

Example 2: One community built a walking track in a neglected roadside park, no longer used because of highway development. The area was deeded to the city with the stipulation that it would be maintained as a park. The area was in need of a major face-lift when it came to the attention of the local coalition. Through a collaborative effort of coalition, city, and county, support was given to create a matching funds program.

For a donation to the "Buy a Piece of the Walk" campaign, the supporter's name was recognized on a sign at the park. Trees were planted, and a three-quarter mile concrete, circular walk track was completed. Long-range plans include lighting to improve the safety of the area, and playground equipment to maintain an emphasis on walking and family involvement. This old "rest stop" is now a busy "activity stop."

(This provides a great example of collaboration and support methods!)

Example 3: Teachers in one school worked with administrators to gain support for a wellness room. Administration provided support by making a room available, while teachers brought in miscellaneous fitness equipment from home to equip the room. The wellness room became a social meeting place...with activity. Teachers gave each other support and many enjoyed equipment that hadn't been used at home! This action also helped to model healthy choices for students!

Reward method of environmental change

We all like to be rewarded for the changes we make. Reward keeps us motivated. There are two types of reward. It can be:

1. **“External Reward:** A reward given from another person or group. It may be in the form of recognition, or a “prize” for something well done. External reward is often used as the only method for motivating children, and too often just the winners! Reward for involvement, not winning, is a more effective manner of motivating everyone.

Concerns related to external rewards include:

- ♥ The reward is often seen as the only reason for participating in the activity...there is too much focus on the reward
- ♥ The external motivation does not encourage and promote lifelong physical activity.

IDEAS for external rewards:

- ♥ Participation awards, i.e., ribbons, certificates, and trophies.
- ♥ Awarding shoe laces for walking distances student determined at school.
- ♥ Individual achievement stickers in PE class.
- ♥ Student recognition of personal achievement through individual, group, community or other appropriate means.
- ♥ Words of verbal praise from a coach, teacher or mentor. The resulting recognition and interaction with the student fosters the probability of continued positive lifestyle behavior choices.

Examples:



Example 1: One community sponsored a yearly walk/fun run during their annual Fall Festival for adults. The school health initiative added a noncompetitive kid’s component and awarded “medals” for all participants. A local bank was so impressed with participation that they upped the ante for the next year. The bank offered a prize of new playground equipment to the school having the most number of participants! Winning the reward has become a yearly goal for schools in the community!

Example 2: Another community offered coupons from area businesses for “healthy foods” for participants in their annual community “walk”. This practice rewards business with recognition of their “healthy contributions.” The action also increased the potential for additional business when the coupons are redeemed. The participants were rewarded with increased awareness of opportunities for healthy eating choices.

2. **“Internal Reward:”** A reward that is not dependent on another person or thing. Internal rewards can include the thrill of a challenge, fun, creativity, curiosity, control (self-responsibility) or desire to learn.

Internal reward/motivation:

- ♥ Increases feelings of physical activity ability
- ♥ Promotes choice, and self-reliance
- ♥ Allows FUN, interest, enjoyment, and excitement to be the major motivators
- ♥ Encourages the learning process, and skill building
- ♥ Combines choice & skills, the key that leads to motivation to be a physically active person



IDEAs for internal rewards:

- ♥ Journaling feelings and ideas
- ♥ Recording efforts
- ♥ Self-assessment and self-monitoring

The fun factor!



Fun is the primary reason children give for participating in physical activity. (6) People are more likely to participate in activities they enjoy, and there are many ways to make physical activity fun. Because what is fun for one person may not be fun for another, a variety of activity opportunities should be planned.

Some people like team sports, others like “social activities” (aerobics or dance classes), while others prefer individual activities (using fitness equipment at home). As you are planning, keep in mind fun is one of the best rewards you can provide!

Additional ideas

Other ideas for environmental change may be found in Active Community Environments (ACEs) publications. ACEs is a CDC sponsored initiative to promote walking, biking, and the development of accessible recreation facilities. (7)

Guidebooks include:

- ♥ ***Active Community Environments***—a guide to collaborative efforts between public health, transportation, and city planning organizations
- ♥ ***Kids Walk-to-School***—a guide for community action to promote walking and biking to school
- ♥ A CDC/National Park Service program to help communities develop and promote local recreation facilities such as parks, trails, and greenways

Creative Walking, Inc. (8) also provides information on creative ways to integrate walking and wellness into a school improvement plan, including “Walk with the Principal,” started by Ray Wilson in Edgefield, SC.



References and Resources

- (1) Physical Activity Message for Parents from New Survey: No More Excuses. International Life Sciences Institute (ILSI). Physical Activity and Nutrition Program/Nutrition and Health Promotion Program. Press Release, Washington, DC, July 1, 1997. Website: <http://www.ilsi.org/nhppress.html>.
- (2) Youth Fitness. Congressional Quarterly, Vol 7, No. 36, Sept. 26, pages 841-864, 1997. As quoted from Susan Kalish, Your Child's Fitness: Practical Advice for Parents
- (3) Physical Activity for Children: A Statement of Guidelines, 1998. National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), 1900 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1599. Phone: (703) 476-3410; website: naspe@aahperd.org.
- (4) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Guidelines for school and community programs to promote lifelong physical activity among young people*. MMWR 1997;46(No. RR-6). Phone 800-458-5231 www.cdc.gov/epo/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00046823.htm

- (5) National Association of State Boards of Education: *Fit, Healthy, and Safe and Healthy Schools Projects*, National Association of State Boards of Education, 277 S. Washington St., Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22314. Phone: 703-684-4000; Website: <http://www.nasbe.org/healthyschools/fithealthy.mgi>
- (6) Physical Best, American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance, 1990 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1599, 703-476-3400, www.aahperd.org , 1999
- (7) Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA. ccdinfo@cdc.gov; <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp>
- (8) Creative Walking, Inc., P.O. Box 50296, Clayton, MO 63105. Phone: 800-762-9255



Module Tip:

Fun is one of the best rewards you can provide!

FAQs:

- ❑ **Question:** Our community doesn't have a complete workout facility. What is the best way to meet the community need?

Answer: A workout facility isn't necessary. Look for opportunities for increased activity in daily living.

- ❑ **Question:** How does the coalition learn what people find fun, to increase opportunities for internal motivation?

Answer: It starts with you. What do you consider fun? Chances are other people will find those things fun too. Talk with people about what they enjoy; consider setting up a "call-in line" through the newspaper or in partnership with a local television station. Provide a list of feasible possibilities along with asking for ideas.

Module Glossary:

External reward: A reward given by another person or group. It may be in the form of recognition, or a "prize" for something well done.



Physical Activity Up-Close

This tool will help you go beyond the community review to take a closer look at physical activity. Consider the following possibilities for each community group (students, teens, parents/adults, senior citizens, business and schools). Use the information as a measure of progress.

List opportunities for physical activity that currently exist in your community.

List good role models for physical activity.

Provide examples of how physical activity is becoming a habit at home, in the school, and in the community.

List age appropriate activities.

Give examples of good opportunities for freeform play for toddlers and preschoolers such as running, jumping up and down, or climbing on a jungle gym.

List structured noncompetitive activities with rules and teams for school-age kids, like soccer, T-ball, or gymnastics.

List examples of low impact activities for senior citizens and others.

List the types of activities that have good participation.

Which of the existing opportunities are not used to their full potential?

What are the communication, time, or location problems...or a lack of facilities or resources...that keep opportunities from being used to their full potential?

Which resources are needed for making changes (people, facilities, and other resources)?



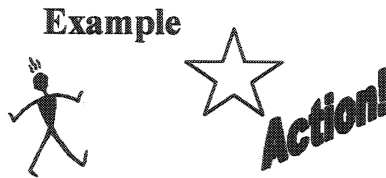
Example

Environmental Change Plan

Objective: Include a new physical activity in at least 2 summer events attended by families by 8/30/05.

Environmental change methods planned. Check all that apply.	Actions and resources needed to implement the plan	Problems to resolve	Who takes action, and by what date?	Review— Results of actions Check all that apply.
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Repetition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Support <input type="checkbox"/> Reward	Action: <i>Plan physical activity during a concert in the park on June 15, 2005</i> Marketing Plan: <i>Announce to coalition in order to solicit volunteers</i> Resources: <i>To be determined</i>		<i>Jane contacts Park Board by 1/2/05</i> <i>Lynn finds volunteers by 4/2/05</i> <i>David organizes activities by 5/2/05</i>	Communication: <input type="checkbox"/> Great marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Need M-and-M's Time: <input type="checkbox"/> Good timing <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work Location: <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work Resources: <input type="checkbox"/> Feasible cost <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work Participation: <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work Overall: <input type="checkbox"/> Great-continue <input type="checkbox"/> Good-revise <input type="checkbox"/> Fair-revise
-Of-	Action: <i>Market</i> Marketing Plan: <i>Discuss on the midday news Park Board, boards, volunteer to write a public service announcement for the radio</i> Resources: <i>posters and other supplies</i>		<i>David and Pat coordinate the event</i>	
Problems resolved: <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Time <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Other	Action: <i>Hold the event</i> Marketing Plan: <i>above</i> Resources: <i>Music and equipment</i>			

Comments:



Event Planning Tool

Title Of Program/Project/Event: Dance to Music in the Park

☐ Media ☐ School ☐ Business ☒ Community

Target Audience: (check all planned for your activity)

☒ Students 250 ☒ Parents 300 ☐ Teachers ☐ School meal director and staff
☐ School administrators ☒ Business/community leaders/community-at-large 200

Outline/Description/Objectives:

Participants will increase their level of physical activity at the concert by dancing to tunes.

1. Band will play 3 tunes designated for "dancing" during the evening
2. The local dance teacher will lead the audience in the dances which will include:
 - a. Line dancing
 - b. Hokey pokey
 - c. 60's and 70's dances such as the "Swim", the "Monkey", the "Jerk"

Marketing Plan: Print flyers for bulletin boards at the library, post office, supermarket, and senior citizen's center. Play the tunes and make an announcement on local radio 2 weeks in advance of the date.

Permits Or Permissions Required: Permission from the Park Board and Band Director

Resource Materials/Supplies/ Handouts/Food/: Microphone for the dance instructor; an area large enough for dancing

Costs/Funding Source:

No cost required

Manpower Needed:

1. Volunteers for bulletin board announcements and posting
2. Radio announcement
3. Dance instructor

Space/Time/Date Requirements:

No special. Date: 6/30/05

Prep Time:

little

Alternate Plan:

Indoor concert at the high school

Comments: